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FARM HOMES USE WIDE VARIETY OF ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

Increased availability of electricity in rural areas is making it possible for most U. S. farm homes to use many of the electrical appliances that are commonly used in city homes, according to replies to a questionnaire mailed by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics last July.

Replies from about 8,400 farmers indicate that 43 percent of all U. S. farms have an electric washing machine; 38 percent have electric refrigerators; and 27 percent are using electricity as power for water systems. Twenty-five percent of the farms have electric vacuum cleaners; 12 percent have electric ranges; 10 percent have electric hot water heaters; and 7 percent have electric sewing machines, according to the survey.

By geographic divisions, farmers in the Pacific Coast group of States reported the largest proportion of the farms with electric appliances. This group of States also has the highest proportion of farms with central station electric service. Farms in the Southern States generally reported the lowest proportions.

The electric washing machine was the most commonly reported appliance in all areas except the South Atlantic and East South Central States where the electric refrigerator was more commonly reported. The electric range was more popular with farm families on the Pacific Coast than in other areas, although farms in the East North Central area, especially in the States of Michigan and Ohio, reported that nearly one farm in three had this appliance. About half of the farms in the Pacific, Middle Atlantic, East North Central, and New England groups of States reported the use of electricity for pumping water.

Only 10 percent of all farms responding stated that they had an electric hot water heater and only in the Pacific Coast States did more than 20 percent of the farms report this item. For the U.S. as a whole, one farm in four reported an electric vacuum cleaner, but over half of the farms in the Middle Atlantic, East North Central States and Pacific States reported having this appliance. Although this survey indicated that only 7 percent of the farms had an electric sewing machine, replies to a 1945 survey indicate that 82 percent of all U.S. farms had some kind of a sewing machine, so that the foot-operated sewing machine apparently is still widely used by farm families despite the increased use of electricity on the farm.

Increased availability of electric power, and the comparatively high level of farm incomes during recent years have made it possible for many farm families to use electrical appliances for the first time. Between 1937 and 1947, the number of farms obtaining electricity from central power stations increased more than threefold. Even though the proportion of farm homes with this service still remains far below the proportion of urban homes with electric service, it is estimated that 61 percent of U. S. farms had central power station electric service on June 30, 1947 1/. Extension of power lines in rural areas has continued at a rapid pace since that time.

^{1/}"Preliminary Report on Survey of Radios, Telephones, and Electricity on Farms, July 1947," United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Washington, D. C., December 1947.

Electrical Appliances: Estimated Percent of Farms Having Specified
Electrical Equipment, United States, July 1947,
by Specified States 1/

State	Refrig- erator	Electric Range	Electric Machine	Washing System	Water Heater	Sewing Machine	Vacuum Cleaner
	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
N. Eng. 2/	58	14	70	45	8	17	43
N. Y.	63	18	80	55	20	13	64
N. J.	72	26	69	69	12	23	61
Pa.	53	20	73	50	16	13	52
M. Atl.	59	20	76	53	17	13	58
Ohio	61	31	79	45	18	15	64
Ind.	65	25	75	53	18	11	61
Ill.	60	26	68	41	16	10	48
Mich.	60	34	83	61	10	14	49
Wis.	43	13	73	36	15	7	36
E. N. Cent.	58	25	75	47	15	12	52
Minn.	37	11	56	25	11	6	29
Iowa	59	20	71	32	15	9	44
Mo.	33	8	37	22	2	7	23
N. Dak. 2/							
S. Dak. 2/							
Nebr.	28	7	36	17	8	6	20
Kans.	26	6	35	17	4	3	20
W. N. Cent.	35	10	74	21	8	6	26
Del. & Md.	63	13	65	43	9	9	36
Va.	32	3	33	19	3	3	10
W. Va.	23	4	40	9	7	3	21
N. C.	27	4	23	18	5	2	6
S. C.	28	7	12	17	3	3	6
Ga.	26	6	16	22	10	6	5
Fla.	31	14	23	30	13	7	13
S. Atl.	29	6	25	20	6	4	9
Ky.	22	5	26	5	4	2	9
Tenn.	24	11	24	10	6	3	8
Ala.	27	8	15	16	5	2	4
Miss.	16	2	7	10	2	2	2
E. S. Cent.	22	6	18	10	4	2	6
Ark.	17	3	21	9	3	4	5
La.	16	2	12	17	4	3	3
Okla.	24	1	31	15	3	5	18
Tex.	25	2	25	16	2	6	9
W. S. Cent.	22	2	23	14	3	5	9
Mount. 2/	49	22	53	32	16	13	34
Wash.	69	30	86	48	35	23	48
Oreg.	67	39	87	63	40	22	47
Calif.	70	35	79	56	33	29	58
Pacific	69	34	83	55	36	26	52
U. S.	38	12	43	27	10	7	25

1/ Data in this table are based upon returns from a mailed questionnaire to a cross-section (random) sample of farmers in the United States. Appliances on only those farms having central station electric service are included. The sampling standard error of the State estimates varies from State to State and from appliance to appliance, the maximum being about 5 percentage points. This statement of sampling error does not include any error that might be attributable to causes other than sampling, nor to the possibility that farmers not responding to the questionnaire might be different from those who do. No significance should be attached to small differences between States. 2/ Sample too small for State estimates.